

Species A; that depicted by Figs. 1A-1H and Fig. 6;

Species B; that depicted by Figs. 2.

In the January 25 Office Action, the Examiner further required that the Applicant elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits should no generic claim finally be held allowable. The Examiner thus required an identification of the elected species and a listing of all claims readable on the elected species. In the February 23 response, the Applicant elected Species A without traverse and identified claims 1-35 as reading on elected Species A.

The Examiner indicated in the June 13 Office Action that the February 23 response was not considered to be fully responsive. As an explanation, the Examiner stated the following:

Looking at Figs. 1A-H and Fig. 6, they are drawn to a first embodiment, and Fig. 2 is drawn to a second embodiment. Claims 1-35 claim two separate and distinct embodiments, and election between the embodiments requires a listing of claims corresponding to the elected species.

The Applicant respectfully submits that the “embodiment” or “species” of FIG. 2 is not *per se* claimed in any of the currently pending claims 1-35. FIG. 2 simply depicts an example of a support structure 120 that may be used, for example, as the support structure 20 used by the example method depicted in FIGS. 1A-1H. The support structure depicted in FIG. 2 thus forms part of certain of the method claims 1-35, but none of these claims 1-35 is specifically directed to the example support structure depicted in FIG. 2.

Absent further clarification from the Examiner, the Applicant respectfully submits that all of the method claims 1-35 read on elected Species A depicted in FIGS. 1A-1H and FIG. 6. The Applicant thus respectfully requests reconsideration of the finding that the election submitted in the February 23 response was non-responsive.

If the Examiner still considers the February 23 response to be non-responsive, the Applicant respectfully submits that further clarification of the election requirement is required. In particular, the Applicant would like to know if the Examiner considers Species B simply to be the object depicted in FIG. 2. On the other hand, if the Examiner considers Species B to be a method, perhaps including a step employing the object depicted in FIG. 2, this information also would be helpful.

The Applicant thus requests further clarification from the Examiner. In particular, the Applicant submits that a telephone conference between the Examiner and the Applicant's undersigned attorney would be very productive under the circumstances. The Applicant's undersigned attorney can normally be reached at the telephone number set forth below.

Signed at Bellingham, County of Whatcom, State of Washington this 13th day of July, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

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37 C.F.R. §1.8

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Date: July 13, 2005